

GREEK THEMES  
IN MODERN MUSICAL  
SETTINGS

PART V.

MUSIC TO CANTICA  
OF THE MENAECHMI

BY

ALBERT A. STANLEY

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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PART V

MUSIC TO CANTICA OF THE  
MENAECMI OF PLAUTUS





## MUSIC TO CANTICA OF THE MENAECCHI

THE principal obstacle to be surmounted in the attempt to give musical expression to certain parts of the *Menaechmi* is well stated in Holy Writ:—"If the light within thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

In the first place, to assume that certain lines were sung by some one not in the cast, while the actor gave in pantomime the suggestions of the text, is to take much for granted; and, in the second place, we have but little certainty as to the technique of the double-pipe, which is supposed to have furnished the accompaniment. We ignored this uncertainty. In the performance of Plautus's *Menaechmi* by the Classical Club of the University of Michigan on the evening of March 30, 1916, the first hypothesis was accepted, but in the music no attempt was made to reconcile opposing views. As a matter of fact the music was intended to "mirror the emotions and enforce the action" in a manner acceptable to a modern audience in which there was a sprinkling of those to whom Latin was in verity a "dead language."

In the effort to attain this end, it must be confessed that methods were resorted to which involved a deliberate ignoring of certain physical characteristics of reed instruments. Before arriving at this determination several attempts were made to restrict all melodic movement to the first clarinet, functioning as the *tibia dextra*, while the second, in the guise of the *tibia sinistra*, gave a drone note. The results were so monotonous, and so unresponsive to dramatic implications, that they were rejected in favor of a treatment for which apologies would be necessary were it not for the fact that it was successful in practice.

As introductory to a consideration of details, two important points should be stressed. They are: first, the consideration that the choral factor did not enter into the equation; and, second, the embarrassing fact that but little rhythmical inspiration was yielded by the text, largely on account of the frequent elisions which generally occurred at points where they successfully brought to

a halt well-nigh every attempt to develop a melody. Here again lack of knowledge regarding the actual pronunciation of elided syllables on the Roman stage must baffle all attempts to present a musical reconstruction which shall be valid from the scientific point of view.

As a compensation, however, the variety of expression in these deliverances of heightened feeling gave abundant opportunity for the display of imagination, while the elisions referred to called for the exercise of ingenuity. The variety of utterance demanded by the situations could be satisfied only by well-trained singers; and as the contrasting nature of the different numbers required singers of special types, the list of participants was increased by four. There were five selections, but Nos. 1 and 3 were given by the same singer.

The representative of the player of the double-pipe was given an exceedingly difficult task, that of appearing to produce the tone from his instrument, and, consequently, of making every movement of his fingers coincide with the music. It can easily be seen that the possibilities of error were not only great but carried absurdities in their train. Having exercised the greatest freedom in formulating the general concept in matters of detail, the composer felt no hesitation in introducing rhythmical innovations, or at least, unusual treatments. It will be noticed that the shorter metrical schemes are conspicuously absent, and that the time-signature 15-8 is frequently employed. This serves to designate a rhythmical procedure by means of which a more logical accentuation in extended lines can be secured, and favors plasticity; for secondary accents within the measure can be so placed as to yield a more perfect interpretation of the text, while at the same time they add subtlety to the rhythmical scheme. The instrumental two-voiced accompaniments are written in a quasi-contrapuntal style, and are designed to be played by clarinets.

To leave the general and consider the particular, the peculiarities and necessities of each number will now be mentioned, in the interest of those who, through a production of this remarkable comedy, may wish to assist in placing Plautus in a more vital relation to lovers of classic drama than is possible by merely studying the text in class — for credit.

The first solo, *Ni mala, ni stulta*, must be sung by a tenor possessing a voice of strident rather than lyric quality, with a



high range, and of great sonority. The angry and petulant utterances of the thoroughly indignant husband require a quasi-declamatory delivery, which is demanded also by the character of the somewhat disconnected phrase formations in the music. It is more effective when sung in strict time, exactly as written.

The recitative *Sine foris sic*, in the first measures of the music assigned to Erotium (No. 2), and the contrasting *Animule me* (line 361) give abundant opportunity for the display of good vocalism and intelligent interpretation, requirements not to be satisfied by any but a competent artist.

*Ut hoc utimur*, the third number, is regular in structure. Since the sentiment is less varied than in the preceding number, the music presents fewer complications, excepting that frequent rhythmical changes are necessary to give the metrical nuances inherent in the text. Among the rhythms employed, 15-8 appears, as it does in No. 2. A characteristic *motive*, first heard in the second measure, is a unifying factor, and is subjected to certain modifications as necessitated by artistic considerations. This motive, in somewhat different form, is also used in the music assigned to the Old Man (No. 4). In No. 3 the actor on the stage is the same as in No. 1, Menaechmus I, and it is more consistent to have both these numbers sung by the same person.

*Ut aetas meast atque ut hoc usus factost* gives the key to an understanding of No. 4. It aims to portray the vocal limitations of an old man as the action reveals the physical. On a word like *feroces*, intentionally given a high tone, a break in the voice cannot fail to give the impression of a man whose vocal apparatus, when forced to utterance by strong emotion, fails to respond. A tenor with a rather light voice and a good command of falsetto, were he willing to sacrifice artistic effect to dramatic truth, could make of this whole scene a real contribution. The instrumental figures in places suggest the uncertain gait of decrepit old age. It must be borne in mind that this music, like the other numbers, must be sung, in the main, in strict time.

When Messenio appears (No. 5), it is plainly evident that he is in more or less of a rage. As rage in certain circumstances is cumulative, the instrumental figures at the beginning of *Spectamen bono servo id est* are delineative of the growing intensity of his feelings. Following the leadings of the text, much of the music is semi-ejaculatory, as befits Messenio's state of mind. It

should be sung by a high, full-voiced baritone, in a dramatic style and with superlative vigor. When the real Messenio calls a halt to his pantomimic activity and prepares to take up the lines, the singer, possibly because he has been supplanted, still suffers from an excess of emotion. Therefore his suppressed feelings are given voice by the double-pipe in terms of the introductory *motive*.

So much for the music. Having laid bare the reasons for the decision to run amuck, as it were, in the composition of this music, and pointed out the demands made upon its interpreters, we may now submit certain details of the Michigan performance, even though some of them may appear to be confessions. Because of the impossibility of securing competent clarinet-players, the *aulos* was represented by a cabinet organ which had a set of reeds of distinct clarinet quality. This organ was placed in the right wing in a position affording a clear view of the stage. As this substitution proved effective, a part for organ or pianoforte appears in the score. If not desired for use in the performance, it will be found useful in rehearsing, for the music given to the singers is distinctly difficult.

The double-pipe in evidence was a fine reproduction of the Roman *tibiae pares*, made by Pelitti, of Milan, for use in the Pompeian Festival of 1883. It is listed as No. 599 in the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments. The performer had memorized the part perfectly and appeared to be really playing the music.

As a rule it is not considered advisable to reveal the secrets of the stage and thus dispel illusion, but at this point a rather successful application of camouflage might be noted. As but one of the singers had the remotest acquaintance with Latin, they found so great difficulty in memorizing the text and music that it became necessary to indulge in deception, by attaching the vocal score, written large, to the back of the costume of the double-pipe player. The singers, standing farther back and somewhat to the left of the player, were then enabled to sing from the music, and thereby won greater freedom than otherwise would have been possible. If the end justifies the means, in this instance the result stilled any qualms of conscience arising from doubt as to the method.

The stage in any case relies more or less on illusion; and, if in this instance the double-pipe player was a music-rack as well, no



loss was occasioned to the audience; for, the combination of functions, not having been perceived, furnished an additional illusion, out of the ordinary.

## LIST OF CANTICA

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<sup>1</sup> The references are to *The Menaechmi of Plautus: The Latin Text, with a Translation*. By Joseph H. Drake.

This edition of the *Menaechmi* was prepared, with stage directions, as a libretto for the presentation of the play at the University of Michigan in 1890. It was revised and republished in 1916. Copies can be obtained by addressing *Latin Department, University Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan*.





# Nº1. Actus I

## SCAENA II

Con anima e vigoroso

Clarinet I  
in B $\flat$

Clarinet II  
in B $\flat$

Menaechmus I

Con anima e vigoroso

Organ

Ni ma-la, ni stul-ta si-es n<sup>i</sup> in - do-mi-t<sup>a</sup> Im-pos-

qu<sup>e</sup> a-ni-mi, quod vi-r<sup>o</sup> es - s<sup>e</sup>o - di - o Vi - de - as, tu - te ti - bi

o - di - o ha - be - as.

*ff*

Prae-ter-hac si mi-hi ta - le post hunc di - em

*ff*

Fa-xis, fa - xo fo - ris vi - du - a vi - sas pa - trem:

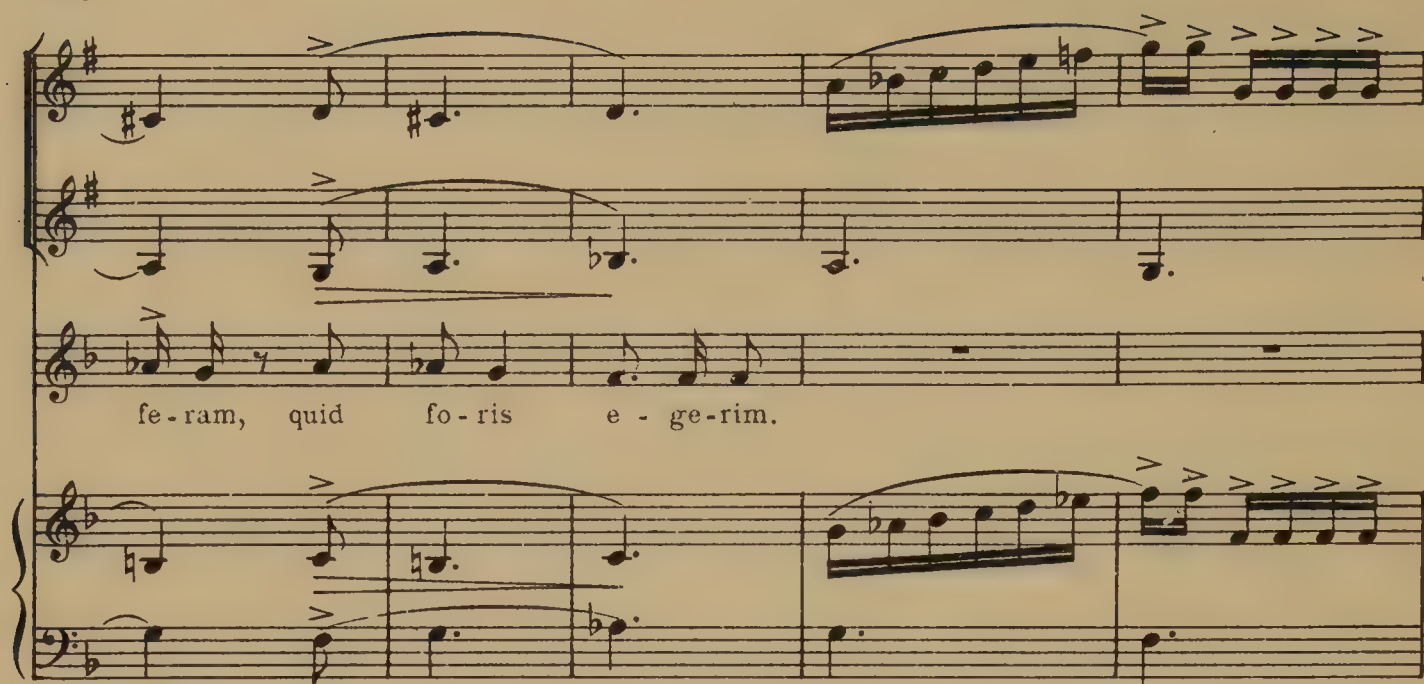
*ff*



Nam quo-ti-ens fo-ras i-re vo-lo, Me re-ti-nes,

re-vo-cas, ro-gi-tas, Quo e-go e-am, quam rem

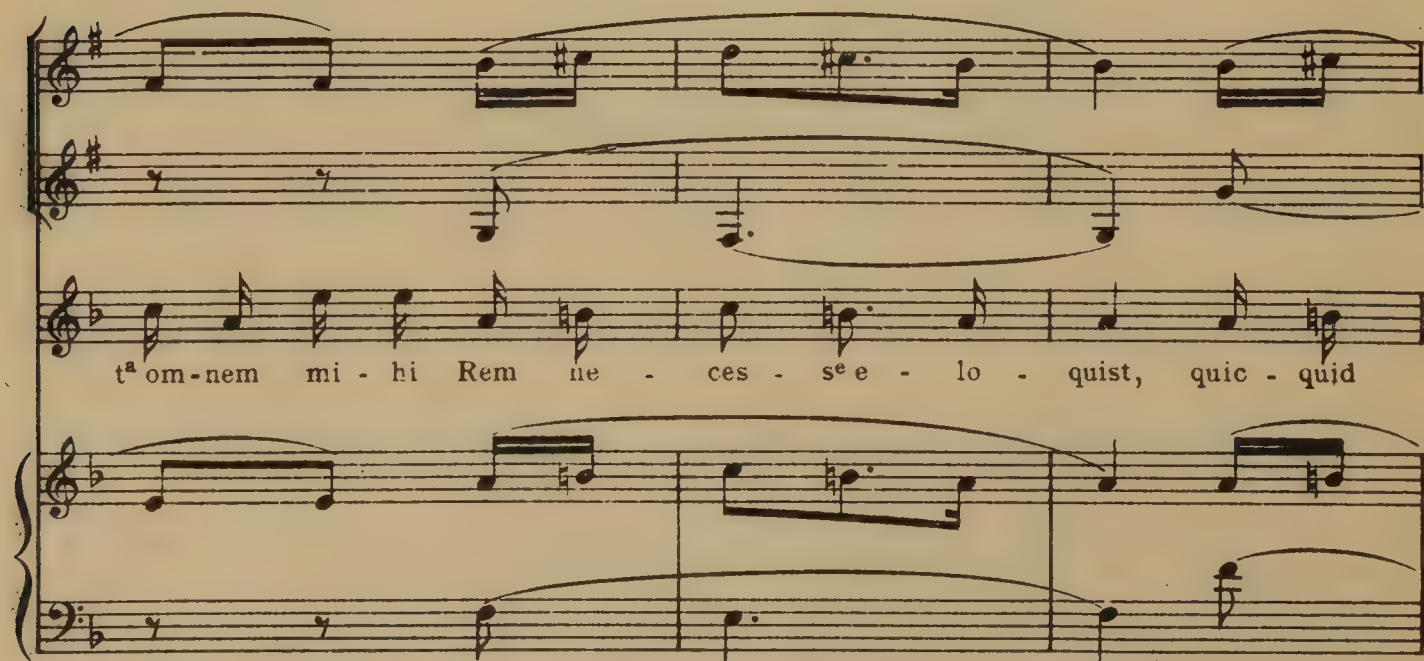
a-gam, quid ne-go-ti ge-ram, Quid pe-tam, quid



fe-ram, quid fo-ris e-ge-rim.



Por-ti-to-rem do-mum du-xi; i-



t<sup>a</sup> om-nem mi-hi Rem ne-ces-se e-lo-quist, quic-quid



Meno mosso molto espressivo

Meno mosso molto espressivo

e-gi at-que a-go. Ni-mi<sup>um</sup> e-go t'e ha-bu-i

Meno mosso molto espressivo

Tempo I

Tempo I

de-li-ca-tam. Nunc a-deo, ut fac-tu-rus,

Tempo I

di-cam. Quan-do e-go ti-bi an-cil-las, pe-num, La-

nam, au - rum, ves - tem, pur - pu - ram Be - ne

prae-be-o nec quic-qu<sup>am</sup> e - ges, Ma - lo ca - ve - bis,

si sa - pis; *ff* *ad lib.* Vi - rum ob - ser - va - re de - si - nes.

No 2. Actus II  
SCAENA III

Recitativo

Clarinet I  
in B $\flat$

Clarinet II  
in B $\flat$

Erotium

Organ

*f* Si-ne fo-ris sic: a-bi, no-1<sup>o</sup> o-pe-ri-ri. In-tus pa-ra, cu-ra;

Andante cantabile con grazia

*mf*

Andante cantabile con grazia

Andante cantabile con grazia

vi-de, Quod o-pust, fi-at.



*p* *pp*

Ster - ni - te lec - tos, In - cen - di - t<sup>e</sup> o - do - res; mun - di - ti - a

*p* *pp*

In - le - ce - br<sup>a</sup> a - ni - most a - man - ti - um, a - man - ti - um. A -

*p* *pp*

man - ti - a - moe - ni - tas ma - lost, no - bis lu - crost. Sed

u - bi il - lest, quem co-quos an - te ae-dis ait es-se? at - que ec-cum vi - de - o,

Più mosso con molto energico

*ff*

Più mosso con molto energico.

Qui mi est u-sui et plu - ru-mum pro - dest.

Più mosso con molto energico

*ff*

I-tem huic ul - tro fit, ut ine - ret, po - tis - su-mus nos - trae ut sit

*molto rit.* Andante grazioso

*p*

*molto rit.*

*p*

do-mi. Nunc eum a-di-bo; ad-lo-quar ul-tro. A-ni-mu-le mi, mi-hi

*molto rit.* Andante grazioso

*p*

*rit.*

*rit.*

*rit.*

mi-ra vi-den-tur Te hic sta-re fo-ris, fo-res quoi pa-te-ant

*rit.*

*a tempo*

*a tempo*

Ma-gis, quam do-mus tu-a, do-mus qu<sup>om</sup> haec tu-a sit. Om-ne pa-

*a tempo*



ra - tumst, Ut ius - sis - ti at - que ut vo - lu - is - ti, Ne - que ti - bi iamst

*con anima*  
*f*  
ul - la mo - ra in - tus. Pran - dium ut ius - sis - ti - hic cu - ra - tumst;

*con anima*  
*f*  
U - bi lu - bet, i - li - cet ac - cu - bit - tum.

## Nº 3 Actus III

## SCAENA II

Moderato

Clarinet I  
in B $\flat$

Clarinet II  
in B $\flat$

Menaechmus I

Organ

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

Ut hoc u - ti-mur ma-xu-me mo-re mo-ro Mo -

les - to - que mul-tum, at - que u - ti qui - que sunt Op - tu - mi,

ma - xu - me mo - rem ha - bent hunc; clu - en - tis Si - bi om - nis

vo - lunt es - se mul - tos; bo - ni - ne an Ma - li sint, id hand quae - ri - tant. Res ma -

gis quae - ri - tur, quam clu - en - tum fi - des quo - i - us



mo-di Clu-e-at. Si est pau-per at-que haud ma-lus, ne-quam ha-be-tur; Sin

di-ves ma-lust, is clu-ens fru-gi ha-be-tur. Qui ne-que

*a tempo*

le-ges ne-que ae-quom bo-num us-quam co-lunt, Sol-li-ci-tos pa-tro-nos

*a tempo*

ha - bent, Da - tum de - ne - gant, quod da - tumst; Li - ti - um ple - ni, ra -

pa - ces, Vi - ri frau - du - len - ti, Qui ant fae - no - re aut per - iu - ri - is

Ha - bent rem pa - ra - tam; mens est in que - re - lis. Iu - ris u - bi di - ci - tur

di - es, si - mul pa - tro - nis di - ci - tur; Quip - pe qui pr<sup>o</sup> il - lis lo - quan - tur,

quae ma - le fe - ce - rint; Aut ad po - pu - lum aut in

rit. e dim.

iu - re aut ad iu - di - cem rest.

rit. e dim.



## No 4. Actus IV

## SCAENA II

Moderato

Clarinet I  
in B $\flat$

Clarinet II  
in B $\flat$

Senex

Organ

*p* *mp*

Ut ae-tas me-ast at-qu<sup>e</sup> ut hoc u-sus

fac - tost, Gra - dum pro - fe - ram, pro - gre - di - ri pro - pe -

ra - bo. Sed id quam mi - hi fa - ci - le sit, haud sum fal - sus.

Nam per - ni - ci - tas de - se - rit; Con - si - tus sum Se - nec - tu - te; o -

nus - tum ge - ro cor - pus; vi - res Re - li - que - re. Ut ae - tas

ma - la mers est ma - la, ma - la ter - go!

Nam res plu - ru-mas pes - su-mas, quom ad - ve - nit, Ad - fert, quas

*rit. e poco adagio*

*rit. e poco adagio*

si au - tu-mem om-nis, ni - mis lon - gus ser - most. Sed haec res

*rit. e poco adagio*



mi-hi in pec-to-r<sup>e</sup> et cor-de cu-raest, Quid-n<sup>am</sup> hoc sit ne-go-ti,

quod fi-li-a sic Re-pen-t<sup>e</sup> ex-pe-tit me, ut ad se-

s<sup>e</sup> i-rem. Nec quid id sit mi-hi, cer-ti-us fa-cit, Quod ve-

lit, quod me, ar-ces - sat. Ve — rum pro - pe-mo-dum iam sci - o,

quid si - es re - i; Cre - do cum vi - ro li - ti - gi - um

## Tempo I

*colla voce*  
*colla voce*  
*ad lib*  
 na-tum es - se a - li - quod. I -

Tempo I

ta is - taec so - lent, quae vi - ros sub-ser - vi - re ——— Si-bi

pos - tu-lant, do - te fre - tae, fe - ro - ces. Et

il - li quo-qu<sup>e</sup>haud ab-sti-nent sae-pe cul - pa.



Ve-rumst mo-dus ta-men, quo-ad pa-ti u-xo-r<sup>em</sup> o - por-tet, Nec pol

fi - li<sup>a</sup>um - quam pa - tr<sup>em</sup> ar - ces - sit ad se,

Ni - si aut quid com - mi - sit vir aut iur - g<sup>i</sup>est cau - sa. Sed id

quic - quid est, i - am sci<sup>am</sup> At-qu<sup>e</sup> ec-e<sup>am</sup> e - am - pse An - te

ae - dis et e - ius vi - rum vi - de - o tris - tem.

*ad lib.*  
Id est, quod sus-pi-ca - bar.

# Nº 5. Actus V

## SCAENA IV

Allegro vigoroso

Clarinet I  
in B $\flat$

Clarinet II  
in B $\flat$

Messenio

Organ

Allegro vigoroso

*ff*

*ff*

Spec -

*ff*



ta - men bo - no ser - v<sup>o</sup> id est, qui rem e - ri - lem, Pro -

cu - rat, vi - det, col - lo - cat, co - gi - tat - que, Ut ab -

sen - te e - ro rem e - ri di - li - gen - ter Tu -

te - tu'r, quam si ip - se ad - sit, aut — rec - ti - us.

Ter - gum quam gu - lam, cru - ra quam ven - trem o -

por - tet Po - ti - o - ra es - se, quoi cor mo - des - te si - tumst. Re - cor -

de - tur id, Qui ni - hi - li sunt, quid is

*molto rit.* *a tempo*  
pre-ti De-tur ab su-is e-ris, Ig - na-vis, im-pro-bis vi-ris.  
*molto rit.* *a tempo*

Ver - be - ra; com - pe - des, Mo - lae, las - si - tu - do,



fa - mes, fri - gus du - rum: Haec pre - ti - a sunt ig -

The first system consists of four staves. The top two staves are vocal parts, and the bottom two are piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the third staff. The music is in a minor key, indicated by two flats in the key signature.

na - - vi - ae. Id e - go ma - lum ma - le

The second system continues the musical piece with four staves. The lyrics are written below the third staff. The piano part features a prominent melodic line in the right hand.

me - tu - o.

The third system concludes the page with four staves. The lyrics are written below the third staff. The piano part features a prominent melodic line in the right hand, marked with a forte (ff) dynamic. The system ends with a double bar line.











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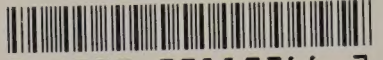
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